

NORFOLK CRICKET BOARD ONE LEAGUE

DETAILED RESPONSE TO CONCERNS

Facilities

Requirements and standards are enshrined in the Standards Matrix that will form part of the General Rules and therefore cannot be relaxed without NCB agreement.

At the level where the NCA meets the NCL, we have established that the proposed requirements are with one or two very specific exceptions already met by the relevant NCL clubs. In the case of those one or two exceptions steps are already in hand to upgrade facilities

Pitches

The Board believes that the quality of pitches is satisfactory for the level at which teams will be participating within One League; as has been demonstrated by those clubs that have made the step up from the NCL to the NCA in recent seasons, along with feedback from those clubs currently participating in both Saturday leagues.

Moving forward within One League, the NCB will:

- Ensure that the standard of pitches is not only maintained but also improved
- Include within the General Rules (which cannot be relaxed without NCB agreement), a requirement that pitches are of appropriate quality at all levels and the board will fund inspections of squares of any club where:
 - Promotion has been gained to a Level where there are higher expectations of the quality of the pitch
 - Concerns have been raised regarding a pitch to the Executive Committee of the league by opposition teams or a NACO-appointed Panel umpire officiating in a league match
 - The league Executive Committee must direct a club to act on advice received.

Clubs seeking to progress to a higher level in the new structure will be encouraged to pro-actively access the Grounds Association programme funded by the NCB to advise on any actions required to improve the quality of a pitch.

Governance and Structure for the New League

Once approved, and ahead of the inaugural AGM, an interim committee will be required to ensure that everything is in place ready for One League to commence in 2022, which will comprise the current NCB's working group (ie Peter Thomas, Andy Westgate, David Reeder, Ian Doy, John Chilvers, David Browne and me) together with Patrick Dewing, Paul Hooton, Kevin Fisher and Kevin Cornwell and also of course with advice and support from Lewis Denmark, our Cricket Development Director. There will also be an umpires' representative.

Serving on the Interim Committee does not mean that the same people will automatically be on the first Executive Committee although we anticipate that a significant number of them will be. In this respect, the Executive Committee will consist of:

- Chair
 - Appointed by the NCB for first two years only to ensure full support and a smooth transition to a single Saturday league in Norfolk
 - Elected and appointed by clubs at the AGM from third year onwards
- Two NCB appointees
 - For the first two years the NCB appointment will include a member of the Interim Committee who is not a NCB director
 - To ensure good governance and an element of independence
 - In recognition that the League Administrator be a paid (part-time) role employed and paid for by the NCB
- Eight members elected by clubs at the AGM
- One NACO representative

It is relevant to note that a similar constitution has been adopted very successfully in Sussex where clubs have recently come together in a unified league.

Also, to ensure good governance of the league and adherence to any ECB requirements for recreational cricket, the NCB is anxious to ensure that the basis on which the new League is set up is not undermined. Therefore, in three very limited cases, it is proposed that changes relating to the general rules, constitution, standards matrix and divisional structure would require the NCB's agreement where that is required to:

- Protect the best interests of Norfolk cricket as a whole
- Ensure clubs in one part of the structure are not prejudicially affected by the introduction of changes by clubs in another part of the structure.
- Maintain consistency with the principles and objectives of the new League.

But simply because NCB agreement is needed in these cases does not mean it will be withheld. It is simply to act as a backstop. And we expect that if such a proposal came forward there would have been discussion with the NCB before it got to the AGM.

Lastly, there is no provision which would allow the NCB to impose any changes on the new League. And all match rules and amendments to match rules are the sole preserve of the member clubs at the AGM.

Keir Hounsome
Chair, Norfolk Cricket Board

February 2021